THE MINISTER OF STEEL & MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) No, Sir. SAIL has not ordered review of any contract of Bhilai Steel Plant.

(b) to (e) Do not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Per Capita Consumption of Steel

2376. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are serious to increase the per capita consumption of steel in the country;

(b) if so, the measures taken in this regard; and

(c) whether Government are planning to increase the consumption of steel in agro sector?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The consumption of steel is related to the stage of economic and industrial development of a country. Following liberalisation, the overall economic growth is likely to further step up steel consumption. The measures taken to increase steel consumption include;

(i) Increased production itself, which has been quite impressive, will lead to increased consumption.

(ii) Ministry of Steel organises seminars to promote steel consumption.

(iii) To promote consumption of steel, an institute named "Institute for Steel Development and Growth" has been incorproated as a society on 26.8.1996 at Catcutta under the Presidentship of Chairman, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) the institute has the mission to promote steel usage in the country by providing better value to the consumers through continual research and design, bringing awarencess and by providing effective and efficient alternatives to the existing practices. (iv) SAIL has created a Segment development Cell to promote use of steel in agricultural segment. The segment development cell would concentrate on product development as also application engineering and marketing aspect of steel for this sector. The initial areas of focus would be on agricultural implements and grain storage systems.

Import of Coal by VSP without Floating Global Tenders

2377. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Visakhapatnam Steel Plant have given a contract of rupees one hundred crores for import of coal without floating global tenders;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any probe has since been ordered in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (Visakhapatnam Steel Plant) entered into long term agreement in the year 1995 for a period of 3 years for import of coal from various sources in Australia in accordance with the terms and conditions and specifications of Low Ash Metallurgical Coking Coal approved by the Board of Directors of the Company.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.